Self-Examination:

WITH

The likeliest means

OF

Conversion,

AND

Salvation.

OR,

Haypy, and welcome advice, if it meets with a Soul ingenious.

The which being thought (by many) worth the transcribing, at no small charge: is now published for the good of all.

By *R. JUNIUS.*

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Self-Examination: With the likelieſt means of *Converſion* and *Salvation*.

CHAP. I.

THoſe that are to paint or print a *pitcht field*, within the compaſs of a ſheet or two of paper, can make but few *Souldiers* whole and compleat; but are forced to ſet down for the moſt part, their *heads* onely or their *helmets*. So I intending to ſay onely enough of theſe Subjects, ſhall be brief, and but ſelect out here and there that which will make moſt for my purpoſe, and the *Readers* benefit.

It is the Abſtract of Religion, to imitate and obey him whom we profeſs to worſhip: neither are we worthy to be called *Chriſtian*, except we imitate *Chriſt*, and endeavour to frame our lives, according to the *Rules* which he hath preſcribed in his *Goſpel*. And why was the Name *Chriſtian* at firſt uſed, but to denominate the true *Diſciples* and *followers of Chriſt*, and to diſtinguiſh them from the *Heathen*? as appears, *Act.* 11.26. But now, (to our ſhame be it ſpoken) let any one compare mens lives with Chriſts life, or thoſe Rules which he hath given us: and he ſhall be forced to confeſs, that either the *Goſpel* is none of *Chriſts*, or few among us are *Chriſtians*. And yet there is ſcarce a man in the *Nation*, (be he never ſo vicious and wicked) but he will ſay he is a *Chriſtian*, and hopes to be ſaved by *Chriſt*, which alone may move wonder to aſtoniſhment! How much more, if we ſhall compare the numberleſs number of our great, and grievous abominations, wherewith our land is filled from corner to corner, with the many and great *means* which *God* hath afforded for our reclaiming.

The principal end for which *man* was *created*, *after the Image of God*, and endowed with gifts and abilities, above all other *viſible creatures*; was, that we might honour, love, and ſerve our *Creator*, and enjoy communion and happineſs with him for ever. And for the ſame end alſo, did the onely *Son of God* die, when we (by *eating the forbidden fruit*) had turned that *Image of God*, into the *Image of Satan*, being in reaſon paſt hope of recovery, even *to redeem us, out of the hands of our ſpiritual enemies; that we might ſerve our Creator and Redeemer*, according to thoſe precepts which he hath given us in his *Word*; *and to ſet forth the praiſe of him, who hath done all this for us*, Luke 1.73,74,75. *That we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him: That he might purge us, to be a peculiar people to himſelf, zealous of good works: That we ſhould deny ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts: And that we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world.* And withal, That we might enjoy everlaſting communion and happineſs, with our *Bleſſed Maker and Redeemer*, as the *Holy Ghoſt* ſets it down, *Epheſ.*1.4. *Tit.*2.12,14. 1 *Pet.*2.24. 2 *Tim.*2.19. *Pſal.*116.12,13,14.

But alas, moſt men know no other end of their *Creation*, but *Recreation*; no other end of their *Redemption*, but to ſatisfie their *luſts*; to *eat*, *drink*, *ſleep*, *ſin*, and make others to ſin; to purſue their *profit*, *pleaſure*, *honour*. This (as they ſuppoſe) is all that *Chriſt* expects from them: For this is the ſum of their *Lords Prayer*, *Creed*, and *Ten Commandments*. Whence (like *men ſleeping in a Boat*) they are carried down the *ſtream* of this *World*, until they arrive at their *Graveſend*, *Death*; without once *waking* to bethink themſelves, whether they are going to *Heaven* or *Hell*. So living like *Beaſts*, becauſe they think they ſhall *die like Beaſts*, and never give any account of what they have either *acted or left undone*. The *luſts of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life*, is the *Trinity* that moſt men *worſhip*.

As for anſwering the end of our *Redemption*, which coſt no leſs a price than the *Blood of Chriſt*. Men do not at all mind it, or if they do, they apply *Chriſts Paſſion*, as a warrant for their licentiouſneſs, not as a remedy; and take his death

as a licence to ſin, *his Croſs* as a *Letters Patent* to do miſchief, ſo *turning the grace of God into wantonneſs*; as if a man ſhould *head his drum of rebellion with his pardon.* As, O the *pride, covetouſneſs, cruelty,* damnable *hypocriſie,* the curſed *ſwearing and curſing,* abominable and worſe then beaſtlike *drunkenneſs, adultery, lying, ſlandering, perſecuting, contempt of Religion* and all goodneſs, *grinding of faces* like edged tools, *ſpilling of blood* like water, *racking of rents, detenſion of wages* and *workmens hire,* incredible *cruelty to ſervants, incloſing of Commons, ingroſſing of commodities, griping exactions,* with ſtraining the advantages of greatneſs, *Unequal levies of legal payments, ſpiteful ſuits, griping uſury, bribery, perjury, partiality, Treaſon and Rebellion, Sacriledge, ſimonaical contracts and ſoul-murther, ſcurrility,* and *prophaneneſs, couſening in bargains, breaking of promiſes, perfidious underminings, atheiſm,* and a world of the like. In ſo much, that there is ſcarce one of an hundred whoſe *knowledg, belief,* and *life,* is in any degree anſwerable to the *Goſpel.* And ſo far are we from loving and ſerving *Chriſt,* that we hate and perſecute thoſe that do it, and that, for their ſo doing.

And (which does exceedingly aggravate our ſhame and wickedneſs) we have all vowed in our *Baptiſm,* to ſerve *Chriſt, taken preſſe-money and great wages* of him to that end, *given ſecurity* by *Sureties,* that we will fight againſt the *World,* the *Fleſh,* and the *Devil:* Yet in a moſt ſhameful manner (the moſt of us) have *renounced our Vow* made to him, *fled from his Standard,* and *fought for Satan* and the *World*: ſeeking to win all we could from *Chriſt,* by *tempting* to ſin, and by *perſecuting* ſuch as we ſee better then our ſelves. Nor does our Vow in *Baptiſm* more aggravate our ſin, then does the *great means* that *Chriſt* hath uſed, *to bring us out of darkneſs into light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* As why do we in this Land enjoy ſo much light and means of grace more then other people? Why hath *God* delivered us from *Paganiſm* and *Popery,* and revealed to us his *Word* ſo plainly and fully? Why hath *Chriſt* continued his *Goſpel,* (the beſt of bleſſings) amongſt us, more then an hundred

years? With ſuch ſupply of able *Miniſters*, that no *Nation under Heaven* may compare with us. Yea when neither his *word*, *mercies*, nor any ordinary means would ſerve the turn; why hath he *at ſeveral times*, and *after ſundry manners* viſited us with ſeveral *judgments*, to try what they would do: but to invite and call us to *repentance*, and to mind us of our many engagements.

CHAP. II.

BUt wo is me! How few of us are the better for all? Yea what eyes can but run over to ſee for the moſt part, what lives men lead?

The *Holy Ghoſt* tells us in the *Word*, and we hear the ſame daily, *That every man ſhall be judged according to his works, be they good or evil*, Rev. 20. 13. *That we ſhall give an account at the day of judgment, for every idle word we ſpeak*, Matth. 12. 36. That there needs no other cauſe of our laſt and heavieſt Doom, then, *ye have not given, ye have not viſited, &c.* Matth. 25. 41, to 46. That *the righteous ſhall ſcarcely be ſaved*, 1 Pet. 4. 18. That *many ſhall ſeek to enter in at the ſtrait gate, and ſhall not be able*, Luke 13. 24. *That no unrighteous perſon ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God, but ſhall have their part and portion in that Lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death*. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, Gal. 5. 21. Revel. 21. 8. *That except our righteouſneſs exceeds the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees*, (who were no mean men for outward and formal performances,) *we ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 4. 20. And *that without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. Yet moſt men live, as if the *Goſpel* were quite contrary to the rule of the *Law*; as if *God* were neither to be feared, nor cared for; as if they were neither beholding to him, nor ſtood in awe of him, both out of his debt and danger: Yea as if there were no *God to judge*, nor *Hell to puniſh*, nor *Heaven to reward*. I cannot think of it without aſtoniſhment! Neither would men *ſpeak* as they ſpeak, *think* as they think, *do* as they do, if they thought that

that their *thoughts*, *words*, and *deeds*, ſhould ever come to *judgment*.

Yea, hear O heavens! be aſtoniſhed O earth, and horribly afraid! that ſuch a *Nation* ſo bleſt, and ſo long forborn, *ſhould be ſo fooliſh and ingratefull*, as thus to *requite the Lord*. As conſider with me, *God* of his goodneſs hath beſtowed *ſo many and ſo great* mercies upon us, that it is not poſſible to expreſs his bounty therein: For if we look *inward*, we finde our Creators mercies; if we look *upward*, his mercy reacheth unto the Heavens; if *downward*, the *Earth is full of his goodneſs*, and ſo is the broad *Sea*; if we look *about us*, what is it that he hath not given us? *air* to breathe in, *fire* to warm us, *water* to cool and cleanſe us? *cloaths* to cover us, *food* to nouriſh us, *fruits* to refreſh us, yea, *delicates* to pleaſe us, *beaſts* to ſerve us, *Angels* to attend us, *Heaven* to receive us; and which is above all, *Himſelf*, *and his own Son*, to be enjoyed of us! Yea, *God* of his goodneſs, hath *removed ſo many evils from us*, and *conferred ſo many good things upon us*; that they are beyond *thought or imagination*. For if the whole World were turned into a *Book*, and all the *Angels* deputed *Writers therein*; they could not ſet down all the *good* which *Gods love in Chriſt* hath done us. And as much do we owe unto *God* for the dangers from which he *delivers us*: As for the *great wealth and dignities*, whereunto he hath always *raiſed us*. Now we are infinitely bound to bleſs *God* for his *external*, *temporal*, *inferior*, *earthly periſhing benefits*: How much more *then* ſhould we praiſe him for the *laſting fruits* of his *eternal love* and *mercy*? as that we are not at this preſent *frying in Hell flames*, never to be freed; that we have the offer of *Heaven*, and *eternal ſalvation*: How thankful ſhould we ſtrive to be? Nor could we poſſibly be unthankful, if we ſeriouſly thought upon *what God gives*, and *what he forgives*? And certainly, if a friend had given us but a *thouſand part* of what *God* hath, we ſhould heartily *love him all our lives*, and *think no thanks ſufficient*.

But that we may the better conſider, what *God* hath done for us, obſerve that when *man* was in a moſt *miſerable* and *undone condition*, by reaſon of *original* and *actual ſin*, and

of the *curſe due to both*; being liable to all *miſeries in this life*, and adjudged to ſuffer *eternal torments in hell fire after death*, having no poſſibity to eſcape the fierce wrath of Almighty God, who had already paſſed ſentence upon him: When neither *Heaven*, *Earth*, nor *Hell*, could have yielded any ſatisfactory thing beſides *Chriſt*, that could have ſatisfied *Gods juſtice*, and merited *Heaven* for us. Then, O then! *God* in his infinite *wiſdom* and *goodneſs*, did not onely find out a way to ſatisfie his *juſtice* and the *Law*; but even *gave us his own Son*, out of his boſom, and his *Son gave himſelf to die*, even the *moſt ſhameful*, *painful*, and *curſed death of the Croſs* to redeem us; *that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life*, John 3.16. A mercy beſtowed, and a way found out, that may aſtoniſh all the ſons of *men on earth*, and *Angels in Heaven*! Wherefore, O wonder at this you that wonder at nothing, that the *eternal God ſhould die to redeem our worſe then loſt ſouls, that we might not die eternally*, and to bring ſalvation to us, even againſt our wills. 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. O *the deepneſs of Gods love*! O the *unmeaſurable meaſure of his bounty*! O *Son of God*, who can ſufficiently *admire thy love*, or *commend thy pity*, or *extol thy praiſe*! It was a wonder that thou *madeſt us for thy ſelf*; more, that thou *madeſt thy ſelf man for us*; but moſt of all, that thou ſhouldeſt *unmake thy ſelf*, that thou ſhouldeſt die to *ſave us*! But behold and ſtand amazed at the return we make of ſo many mercies! For whereas *God* hath *removed ſo many evils* (ſpiritual and corporal, temporal and eternal) *from us*, and conferred *ſo many good things upon us*; we by way of requital, have ſtriven to multiply offences againſt him, and to make them as infinite in number, as his bleſſings. Loth I am to accuſe my *Nation*, but Conſcience compels me: for we are ſo far from loving and ſerving *Chriſt* for his unſpeakable and unexpreſſible love, towards us; that *what he commands, we do the contrary*. Yea, we have done nothing from our infancy, but *added ſin unto ſin*; as *God hath added mercy to mercy*. There is no *part*, *power*, *function*, or *faculty*, either of our *ſouls* or *bodies*, that is not become a ready inſtrument to diſhonour their Maker. Even *every part diſhonours Chriſt, which yet would be glorified of him*. And as

if

if we had *contracted with the Devil*, that we would abuſe all our *heavenly Fathers* gifts, ſo faſt as they come: his *bleſſings* make us *proud*, his *riches*, *covetous*; his *peace*, *wanton*; his *meats*, *intemperate*, his *mercy*, *ſecure*; and all his benefits ſerve us but as weapons to rebel againſt him. As we have been *fatted with Gods bleſſings*, we have *ſpurned at his precepts*. Reſembling the *Leopard*, who *wrongs* him *moſt*, that gives him moſt fodder. O my brethren! *Englands unthankfulneſs* hath ſtriven even with *Gods goodneſs* for the victory: as *Abſalom* ſtrove with *David*, whether the *Father* ſhould be more *kind* to the *Son*, or the *Son* more *unkind* to the *Father!* As what think you?

That the road to *Hell* (a place ſo *wofull* and *dolorous*) ſhould be ſo exceedingly *thronged*, and the way to *Heaven* (a place ſo *bleſſed* and *glorious*) ſhould be almoſt wholly *neglected*, Matth. 7. 13, 14. John 5. 19. Rev. 20. 8. That *Chriſt* ſhould lay down his life to ranſom and redeem men from *infinite*, *intollerable*, and *interminable torments*; and to purchaſe for them *ſuch pleaſures*, *as never entred into the heart of man to conceive*: and yet *Satan* (that bloody devouring Dragon, and vowed enemy of all mankind) ſhould have more *Servants* and *Voluntiers* than *Chriſt*; and they do far more for him, than *Chriſts* ſervants do for their Lord! *Rev.* 3. 4. and 13. 16. *Rom.* 10. 15. That men ſuppoſed rational, ſhould reſolve to deſtroy themſelves; that they ſhould love damnation, that they ſhould hate their own ſouls, as well as holineſs, and the holy *God*; and all for ſin and vanity, ſuch a wretched emptineſs; this is the greateſt folly and *frenzy* imaginable; This above all, deſerves *bitter lamentation*! yea, what *Sea of blood*, is enough to bemoan this *fooliſh*, *wicked*, and *deſperate madneſs*.

CHAP. III.

Queſt. BUt will you know how it comes to be ſo? for the *Word of God* (in this as in all other caſes) will acquaint us therewith.

Anſw. Many Reaſons hereof might be collected from the *Word*; but theſe few may ſerve.

Every

Every *man is born ſtark dead in ſin*; and whereas the *Word preached*, is *ſpirit and life to quicken* thoſe that are *dead* in ſin, and to *raiſe up* thoſe that are therewith *caſt down*: they will either not hear the *Word*, (as I think I may ſay, that one half of the men and women in the *Kingdom* come not once a year within the *Church* doors: It were good they were *compelled to hear* this *Word of life*, which is the onely ordinary means of ſalvation:) Or if they do hear it, they will not apply it to themſelves, or be reformed by it; but contrarily reſolve to continue their ſins, until at length the cuſtom and reiteration of ſin, and rejecting the means, *brands their hearts*, and *blinds their minds*, Jer. 13. 23. *They will not receive the truth in love, that they may be ſaved: Therefore are given up to ſtrong deluſions, to believe lies, that they may be damned*, 2 Theſ. 2. 10, 11, 12. *They will not regard, nor retain God in their thoughts*; therefore God gives them over to a reprobate mind, *Rom.* 1. 28. They will not take the *Spirits counſel*, therefore the *Spirit gives them up to walk in their own counſels*, Jer. 9. 13, 14, 15. They think they have as good hearts as the beſt, and therefore they will follow that deceitful guide, *Ezek.* 14. 3, 4, 5. They will not by any means that *Chriſt* can uſe, *underſtand, nor be converted, nor ſaved: Therefore they ſhall not underſtand, nor be converted, nor ſaved.* Iſa. 6. 9, 10. Matth. 13. 15. They will believe *Satan*, that promiſes proſperity to ſin, yea, *life and ſalvation* (as the *Pope* promiſed to the *Powder Traytors*) rather than believe *God* who threatens *Hell* and *damnation*, if men do not repent of and forſake their ſins: Therefore *God* delivers them up to *Satan*, ſo to be *deluded, that the light of the glorious of Goſpel of Chriſt, ſhall not ſhine unto them* 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. Eph. 2. 2. 2 Theſ. 2. 9, 10. Neither will they *believe what is written*, until they *feel what is written*. And therefore ſhall *fire and brimſtone confute them*, becauſe *nothing elſe will do it*. And let ſuch take notice, that when men reject all good means, and refuſe to ſerve the *juſt and true God*, provoking him by their rebellious and damnable wickedneſs: He in juſtice gives them over to *the falſe, namely, the god of this world*, to be taught and governed by him. Even as a

juſt

juſt Judg, having *paſt ſentence* upon ſome hainous *Maleſactor*, gives him up to the *Jaylor* or *Executioner*, as you may ſee by ſundry places, as 2 *Theſ.* 2. 10, 11, 12. 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. *Eph.* 2. 2. *John* 8. 44. & 12. 31. & 13. 2. & 14. 30. *Acts* 5. 3. 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. *Gen.* 3. 1, to 6. & 15. *Revel.* 2. 10. 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4. 1 *Kings* 22. 20, 21, 22. Which being ſo, no wonder there ſhould be *ſo many Athieſts*, and *ſo few Chriſtians* in this our *Goſhen*, where hath been ſuch preaching, that no people in the world enjoy the like.

True, they will not believe that *Satan* hath any power over them, no, they defie the *Devil*, and all his works: But if the *Word of God* be true, they *are the devils captives, at his command, and ready to do his will*: For *he rules over, and works in them his pleaſure*, as the Apoſtle witneſſeth, 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. *Eph.* 2. 2, 3. Yea, he enters into them, and puts it into their hearts what he will have them to do, *John.* 13. 2. *Acts* 5. 3. 1 *Chron.* 21. 1 Opens their mouths, ſpeaks in, and by them, *Gen.* 3. 1, 6. Stretcheth out their hands, and they act as he will have them, *Acts* 12. 1, 2. *Revel.* 2. 10. He being their *God*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. their *King*, *John* 12. 31. & 14. 30 and their *Father*, *Gen.* 3. 15. *John.* 8. 44. Which being ſo, no wonder men ſhould be ſo miſtaken in judging themſelves *Chriſtians*; while they are indeed *worſe enemies to Chriſt* and his *Goſpel*, then are meer *Heathens*. No wonder when onely thoſe that are ſpiritual, can judge of ſpiritual things. For *the natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*, 1 Cor. 2. 14.

Again, It were impoſſible (were it not for the fore-going reaſons) that in the midſt of ſo much light, and means of grace ſo few ſhould be converted: For otherwiſe *the Word of God* is ſo *powerful*, and the *Goſpel* ſo *raviſhing*, that the *world* could not ſtand before it without ſubmitting to it. Yea, were it not for this, how were it poſſible? that *we*. (who *are as traytors, condemned to ſuffer eternal torments in Hell fire*, being *onely reprieved for a time*) ſhould hear the *Goſpel*, and *glad tidings of ſalvation* (day after day, and year after year.) *Which is the ſtrong arm of the Lord, and the mighty power of God to ſalvation*, Rom. 1. 16.

1.16. *Quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword*, &c. *Eph.*6.17. *Jer.*23.29,30. 2 *Cor.*10.4,5. *Heb.*4. 12. And wherein *God offers us a pardon*, in tendering *Chriſt* unto us, upon the condition of *faith* and *repentance*; which is *ſuch a ſpectacle of unſpeakable mercy*, as might *raviſh our ſouls with admiration?* and ſtand it out, and being ſo far from *accepting a pardon thankfully*, that we *refuſe and contemn it*; yea, in a manner deride the offer: For we oppoſe the *Goſpel* and perſecute *Chriſt* in his members, either with *hand*, or *tongue*, or *both*, and are ſo far from imitating *Chriſt*, or obſerving his *precepts*, in being *holy* our ſelves, that we (moſt of us) hate and ſcoff at holineſs in others: Here is ingratitude, here is *fooliſh*, *wicked*, and *deſperate madneſs with a witneſs!* And how could this be, were it not for the foregoing Reaſons? Neither could men elſe, but *hate ſin, and love holineſs*: For (beſides that any rational man, would rather *go to Heaven and be ſaved*, than *to Hell and be damned*;) even *Plato* a meer *Heathen* could ſay, that *vertue*, if it be *clearly diſcerned*, moves great love and affection: And that in caſe *a vertuous ſoul*, could but be *ſeen with corporal eyes*, it would raviſh all men, and ſet their hearts on fire with love and admiration of the ſame.

CHAP. IV.

BUt you will ask me, who are ſuch as may properly be called *Chriſtians?*

Anſw. Thoſe that are rightly ſo ſtyled, do in ſome meaſure walk according to the *rules* and *precepts* of the *Goſpel*, as theſe and the like, though with much infirmity. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, and ſtrength; and thy neighbour as thy ſelf*, Matth. 22. 37, 39. *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do; do all to the glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do unto you, even the ſame do unto them*, Mat. 7. 12, *&c.* He walks not according to the rud ments of the World, neither does he follow the example of the *greateſt number*, nor the *greateſt men*, nor the

great

greateſt *Scholars*, any farther then they follow *Chriſt*. But he *ſerves God in ſpirit*, according to *Chriſts Goſpel*: for ſo far forth as he can, he *lives* and *believes*, and *hears*, and *invocates*, and *hopes*, and *fears*, and *loves*, and *worſhips God* in ſuch manner as his *Word* preſcribes, without *addition*, or *diminution*. And having ſo done and performed his utmoſt, (not to deſerve by it, but to expreſs his thankfulneſs to *Chriſt* that hath *done and ſuffered* ſo much for him;) he *confeſſeth himſelf an unprofitable ſervant*, and that in all, he comes far ſhort of performing his duty, *Luke* 17. 10. If you would have a full and compleat *Character* of ſuch an one, for your imitation, and direction; or for a pattern to *know*, *believe*, and *live* by, read *The whole Duty of a Chriſtian* lately Printed for Mr. *Crips*. In the mean time know, that we are *not born, but new born Chriſtians*, by the immortal ſeed of the *Word*, and the *Spirits* powerful working with it. And when any one is new born, it will appear by this: *Regeneration or new birth, is a creation of new qualities in the ſoul*, as being by nature onely evil diſpoſed. In all that are born anew, is a *change*, both *in the judgement*, from *error* to *truth*, and in the *will*, from *evill* to *good*, and in the *affections*, from *loving evill*, and *hating good*, to *love good* and *hate evil*; in the whole man, *from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*. Nor is there one of that ſmall number, whom *Chriſt* hath choſen out of the *World*; but is able to ſay, I bleſs *God*, his *Word and Spirit* hath wrought in me ſuch a change, and ſtrange alteration, that it hath *opened mine eyes* that were *blind before*, *inclined my will* to *obedience*, which before was *rebellious*, *ſoftned my heart*, *ſanctified*, and quite *changed my affections*: So that *I now love that good which before I hated*, and *hate that evil which before I loved*; and am *delighted* with thoſe holy exerciſes, which heretofore did moſt *diſpleaſe me*, and am *diſpleaſed* with thoſe vain pleaſures, and filthy ſins, which in time paſt did *moſt delight* me, and accounts the ſame ſuch a mercy, that no tongue is able to expreſs it.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

BUt to bring this home to our ſelves: Are none *Chriſtians* but ſuch as *imitate Chriſt*, and endeavour to make the *Goſpel* a rule for them to walk by? then in the firſt place, they that are in their *judgments*, *affections* and *actions*, quite *contrary to Chriſt and the Goſpel*, are far from being *Chriſtians*. And of this number are all *Drunkards*, *Swearers*, and *Curſers*, all the *laſcivious* and *voluptuous*, all *Adulterers* and *Fornicators*, all *covetous*, *unjuſt*, and *unmerciful* men, all *Seducers*, *falſe Teachers*, and ſuch us *err in Fundamentals*, or *hold damnable Opinions*; all *ignorant perſons that know not God*, nor the very firſt *principles of Chriſtianity*; which every one muſt of neceſſity know, or he cannot be ſaved, *Iſa.* 27. 11. *Hoſ.* 4. 6. 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7, 8. *Prov.* 19 2. *John* 3. 19. and the number of theſe are numberleſs: all the *rebellious*, and *diſobedient*, all *lyars*, *flatterers*, and *time ſervers*, who like thoſe *Chaldeans*, Dan. 3. 7. would *worſhip a golden Image*, rather then for-go their immunities; all *open* or *ſecret enemies to the power of godlineſs*; as *ſcoffers at holineſs*, and *haters of the good*, who are not a few; all *Idolaters*, *railers*, the *fearful* and *unbelieving*; *Sorcerers*, &c. who *ſhall* every one, (if they repent not) *have their part and portion in the Lake, that burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death*; as the *Holy Ghoſt* witneſſeth, *Rev.* 21. 8. 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. All theſe I ſay, ſhew by their works, that they ſerve not the *Lord Jeſus*, but their Father the *Devil*; and therefore ought not to be owned as *Chriſtians*. For what ſaith the *Apoſtle*? *his ſervants we are, to whom we yield obedience*, Rom. 6. 16. See more *Gal.* 5. 24. 2 *Pet.* 2. 19. *Matth.* 6. 24. *Luke* 1. 74, 75. So that it is an infallible argument, if we obſerve and obey *Chriſts precepts*, we are *his Servants*; if *Satans commands*, we are *his ſubjects* and *ſlaves*. Men may pretend what they will, but we are bound to believe the *God of truth*; and what ſaith Saint *John*, He that pretends intereſt in *God*, or *Chriſt*, *and keepeth not his commandments, is a lyar, and the truth is not in him*,

him, 1 *John* 2.4,5. and in the third Chapter and eight verſe, he affirms plainly, that all *wilful ſinners* are the *Devils ſervants*. And indeed let men flatter themſelves, or pretend what they will; it cannot be denied but the *fruit tells beſt, the name of the tree*. The *converſation* above all, ſhews who carries the bridle of the *will*, whether *God* or *Satan*. And did not men purpoſely *ſhut their eyes, ſtop their ears*, and *harden their own hearts, leſt they ſhould ſee and hear, and ſo be converted*, as our Saviour himſelf ſpeaks, *Matth.* 13.15. they could not but know, that the whole Bible beats upon this? It is St. *Pauls* everlaſting Rule, *Rom.* 6.16. *Ye are his ſervants to whom ye obey*: And St. *Peters* infallible Doctrine, 2 *Pet.* 2.19. *Of whom a man is overcome, unto him he is in bondage*. And St. *John*, *In this are the children of God known, and the children of the Devil: Whoſoever doth not righteouſneſs, is not of God, but of the Devil*, 1 John 3.8,10. And after this manner does our Saviour reaſon with the Jews, *John* 8. 33, to 48. See then whoſe *commands ye do*, *Gods* or *Satans*; if *Satans*, then ſaith St. *John*, *Let no man deceive you through vain words; for he onely that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous, and he that doth unrighteouſneſs, is of the Devil*, 1 John 3. 7, 8.

Now what can be ſpoken *more expreſs*, or *more full* to the point in hand? Nevertheleſs as the *Jews*, Joh. 8. *thought we may put away our wives, we may ſwear, we may hate our enemies, we may kill the Prophets, ſubject the Word of God to our traditions, and follow our own luſts*; and yet they moſt confidently believed, and ſtiffly *maintained that God was their Father*, verſ. 41. Though by their leave *Chriſt calls them baſtards, and finds out another Father for them*, ver. 44. *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the luſts of your Father ye will do*. As indeed they did not long after; for they *murthered the ſame Chriſt*, who was *the onely Son of God*, which proved it ſufficiently. Even ſo will the worſt of men in theſe days, boaſt themſelves *Chriſtians*. Such as do *nothing but ſin, and make others to ſin*: ſuch as *glory in, and maintain their ſins*.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

ONe *minds* nothing but *his cups*, another nothing but *his coine*, a third nothing but *his Courtizan*; yet all theſe promiſe to meet in *Heaven*. Yea, there is *ſcarce a man on earth, but he thinks to go to Heaven*. Which yet is no wonder, if you conſider all. For what the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* 3. is appliable to all that are in their *natural condition*: *Their minds were blinded, for until this day remaineth the ſame Vail upon their hearts untaken away, in the reading of the Old Teſtament: which Vail, when they ſhall turn to the Lord, ſhall be taken away in Chriſt*, v. 14, 15, 16. Neither do they ſpeak other than they think in this caſe; as being of, and holding *that reprobate*, and yet *common error of* Unomius, *That faith without works* will ſerve. Onely *believe, and thou ſhalt be ſaved*; *no matter how men live*. Whence it is, they do not in the leaſt doubt but to *have benefit by the Goſpel*, when yet they *will not be tied to the leaſt tittle of the Law*. Whence it is, that *moſt men walk in the broad way, and yet every man thinks to enter in at the ſtrait gate*. They will *boldly do what God forbids, and yet confidently hope to eſcape what he threatens*. But let all ſuch *read theſe two Scriptures and tremble*: The firſt is, *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. where the Lord tells us expreſly, that *he will not be merciful, to ſuch as flatter themſelves in an evil way, but that his wrath and jealouſie ſhall ſmoak againſt them, and every curſe that is written in his Book ſhall light upon them, &c.* And the ſecond is, *Prov.* I. *That if we will not regard, nor hearken unto God when he calls upon us for repentance: he will not hear nor regard us, when in our diſtreſs and anguiſh we ſhall call upon him for mercy; but even laugh at our deſtruction, and mock when our fear cometh*, v. 24, to 33. See other places to this purpoſe, *Heb.* 12. 29. *Deut.* 4. 24, *Matth.* 25. 30, 41, to 64. and 3. 10. Theſe are *Scriptures that would ſtartle them, were they not ſtark dead*; but all is one, *God they* may *hear*, but *the Devil will they believe*, as it fared with our *Firſt Parents*, when they eat the *forbidden fruit, at the price of death eternal*:

ternal: Sin like Opium, brings them into a dead sleep, and in *sleeping* they *dream*, and suppose themselves *good Christians:* Even *as a Beggar may dream he is a King*, or *a Traytor that he shall be crowned, when he is to be beheaded:* and for the time be as much pleased therewith. And so in this case, whereof we have *three* most *remarkable instances* in the *New Testament*, the one *Rev.* 3.17. another *Luke* 18.11,12. the third, *Mark* 10.19,20. Which examples sufficiently declare, that these mens *faith* is but a *dream*, their *hope* but a *dream*, their *obedience* but a *dream*, their whole *religion* but a *dream*, and so their *assurance of salvation* is but a *dream*. They have *Regeneration in conceit*, *Repentance* and *righteousness* in *conceit*, they *serve God well in conceit*, and they *shall go to Heaven onely in conceit, or in a dream, and never wake until they feel themselves in the flames of Hell.* And the truth is, were it not for *Pride* and *Ignorance*, a world of men would be ashamed to have their faces seen abroad. As, but take away from mens minds, *vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations*, and the like, you will leave *the minds of most men and women* but *poor shrunken things, full of melancholly, indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves.* O my brethren, take heed of *sinning away your reason*, lest *by loss of conscience*, you become *Atheists*, and *by loss of reason, beasts.* As, what are these better than *beasts* for matter of *reason?* For suppose they are *as wicked as Devils in their lives*, yet this shall serve to blind conscience; *They have good hearts, and mean well*, whatever their lives be: When every wise man knows, that the *outward actions declare the inward intentions: A good conversion is proved by a good conversation.* Nor is there any evil in the *mouth*, or *hand*, which was not in the *heart* first of all; as the *stream* is first in the *Fountain. Out of the heart*, saith *our Saviour, proceed evil thoughts, murthers, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies*, Matth. 15. 19. Yet we have good hearts, and mean well: Alas, poor ignorant souls! *for every drop of wickedness* that appears in the *life, there is an Ocean in the heart. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked*, Jer. 17.9. and when a man think; there is no deceit in it, even in that he

is moſt of all deceived. Inſomuch, that every man hath need to pray, *O God defend me from my ſelf*; for *a mans own heart is as arch a traytor as any he ſhall meet withal*; *we truſt it too much, and know it too little*; as it fared with *Hazael*, 2 King. 8.12,13. and *Peter*, Matth. 26.33. and thoſe *Jews*, Act. 2.36.

But though they know not their own hearts, yet *God* knows them, and others may know them: For *words and actions expreſs our hearts to men*, as *thoughts to God*: Why elſe does *our Saviour* ſay, *by their fruits ye ſhall know them*, Matth. 7. 16, 20. And again more expreſly, *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh*, Matth. 12. verſ. 34. Yea, yet more fully, *A good man out of the good treaſury of his heart bringeth forth good things*; *and an evil man out of the evil treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things*. ver. 35.

But beſides our warrant from *Gods Word*; *the tongue is the bewrayer of the heart*, ſays *Pythagoras*. *A man is by nothing better known, then by his communication*, ſays *Seneca*. *The habit of the mind, is beſt perceived by a mans talking*, ſaith *Diogenes*. *He who cannot rule his Tongue, can much leſs rule his luſts*, ſays *Socrates*. And another, *Evil ſpeaking diſcovers an evil heart, as the ſtriking of the clapper does a broken Bell*. Yea, it were ſenſeleſs to think the *Fountain pure*, when the *ſtreams that flow from it*, are *corrupt*; that *Garlick* ſhould grow out of a *Vine-ſtock*. That *Wine* ſhould be in the *Veſſel*, when onely *Vinegar comes forth*. *Away than with that more fooliſh than common boaſt of a good heart, when the tongue is foul, and the life filthy*: For *when ſmoak comes out of the chimney, there muſt needs be fire on the hearth*. *When the floods of wickedneſs come guſhing out at thine hands and mouth, thire muſt needs be a ſpring in thine heart which maintains them*.

CHAP. VII.

WHerefore take heed of flattering, or ſoothing thy ſelf up with a *vain and falſe hope*: which is much *more common* in the World, than that which is *ſound and good*; even as *baſtard Pearls* are *more*

frequently

frequently worn then true Pearls are. And in caſe thou wouldeſt be *looſed from the chains of thy ſins, and delivered from the chains of plagues:* That thou wouldeſt have the ſame *Chriſt, with his precious blood to free thee, that ſhall with his Word ſentence others.* Then endeavour to become a true, and real Chriſtian, and reſolve ſo neer as thou canſt, to *obey Chriſt in all that he commands.* And indeed, *if Chriſt be formed in any, he deſtroyeth the devils power, which formerly he had in them,* Heb. 2. 14, 15. *and his wicked works,* 1 John 3. 8. *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature,* 2 Cor. 5. 17. Wherefore *ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well,* Iſa. 1. 16, 17. For *fruitfulneſs* is the beſt argument that we are begotten anew. Nor can it be denied, but the *ſigns of ſalvation* are to be ſought *in our ſelves,* as *the cauſe in Jeſus Chriſt. Our Juſtification is to be proved by the fruits of our Sanctification:* and though *faith alone juſtifieth,* yet *juſtifying faith is never alone,* but ever accompanied with *ſpiritual graces, the beauties of the ſoul;* and *good works the beauty of graces:* Yea they are *as inſeparable, as the root and the ſap, the ſun and its light:* And as *fire* is to be diſcerned by *heat,* and *life* by *motion;* ſo a mans *faith* may be diſcerned *by the fruits of it.* Wherefore fancy not thy ſelf to be a *Chriſtian,* until thou beeſt one; and when thou art ſo, thou wilt (by help from above) endeavour *to bring into captivity every thought* and thing *to the obedience of Chriſt,* 2 Cor. 10. 5. 1 Joh. 2. 4. And indeed the very *end of Gods electing,* and of *Chriſts redeeming us, was that we might be holy,* Epheſ. 1. 4. Matth. 19. 17. *And therefore he binds it with an Oath, that whomſoever he redeemeth out of the hands of our ſpiritual enemies, they ſhall worſhip him in holineſs and righteouſneſs all the days of their lives,* Luke 1. 70, to 76. 1 Pet. 2. 24. They therefore that *never* came to be *holy,* were *never choſen, never redeemed:* Other Scriptures to this purpoſe are many? ſee onely *Tit.* 2. 12, 14. 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. *Mat.* 19. 17. *Nor ought any indeed, to call upon Chriſt, or once to name him with their mouths, except they depart from iniquity,* 2 *Tim.* 2. 19, And take this for a rule, *If Chriſt be not our King to govern us, he will neither be our Prophet to forewarn, nor our Prieſt to expiate.* I ſpeak this in hope, that *God* may

bleſs it to ſome one that ſhall read the ſame; but for the generality, *It is as meer loſt labor to preach unto men the things of God, before they be truly humbled with the ſight of their wants; as it is to offer light to a blinde man, to ſpeak to a deaf man, or to labor to make a bruit Beaſt wiſe,* as *Cyprian* hath it.

CHAP. VIII.

THus I have proved, That all who walk contrary to the *Goſpel*, are ſo far from being *Chriſtians*, that they are *the Devils ſervants*, who in the end will *pay them* their deſerved *wages*. I come now to ſhew who are *Chriſtians in appearance onely, or almoſt Chriſtians*, and what their reward will be; the former, I fear, are two thirds of the Nation, theſe in all probability are two thirds of the Reſidue. And of this ſort are, firſt, ſuch as are *meerly civil*, or *moral*, becauſe they take *morality* and *reſtraining grace*, for *piety and renewing grace*; *conviction* for *converſion*; *reformation* for *regeneration*. True *morality* and *civility* may commend us to men, like our ſelves, that ſee only the outſide, but not to *God* who knows the heart; nor will it bring us to *Heaven* and *Salvation*. They may ſuppoſe themſelves in a good eſtate, but except they *be renewed, renounce their own righteouſneſs, and ſeek to be juſtified onely by Faith in Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs: Thieves and Harlots ſhall go before them into the Kingdom of Heaven*, as our *Saviour* told their brethren the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who counted themſelves juſt, and truſted to their own merits, *Matth.* 21. 31, 32. *Luk.* 18. 10, 11, 12. Beſides, as *nothing* is *more eaſily broken, then that which is moſt hard*, ſo *notorious offenders* are nothing ſo hard to be *convinced* and *converted* as the *civilly honeſt*; which alſo greatens their miſery, though their condition of it ſelf is very deplorable: For all ſuch are to know, that their very beſt ſervices, as *praying*, and *faſting*, and *receiving*, and *giving of alms*, &c. (becauſe they are not done in *faith* and *obedience to the Word*, and that *God* may be glorified thereby) are no better in *Gods* account, than *if they had ſlain a man*,

or

or cut off a dogs neck, or offered swines blood, or blessed an Idol: as himself affirms, *Isai.* 66. 3. Nor will *God* accept of any action, except it *flow from a pious and good heart, sanctified by the Holy Ghost.* Yea, *civil honesty* severed from *true piety, humility, saving knowledg, sincere love to God, true obedience to his Word, justifying faith, a zeal of Gods glory, and a desire to edifie, and win others; God will neither accept, nor reward,* but account of their *moral vertues,* as of *shining* or *glistering sins,* because they spring from *pride, ignorance, infidelity, self-love,* and other the like carnal respects, as many examples prove; namely, *Cains sacrificing,* 1 Joh. 3. 12. *The Jews fasting,* Isa. 58. *those Reprobates preaching in Christs name, and casting out Devils,* Matth. 7. 22, 23. and the like, whose outward works were the same which the godly perform. And what saith S. *Austin* most excellently, There is no *true Vertue,* where there is no *true Religion,* and that *conscience* which is not directed by the *Word,* even when it *does best, does ill*; because it doth it not in *faith, obedience and love.*

Secondly, let them know, that being out of *Christ,* they are bound to keep the whole *Law,* Gal. 5. 2, 3. or stand liable to suffer the penalty thereof, for not keeping it. For though this be the condition of the *New Covenant, Believe, and thou shalt be saved*; yet all that they have to trust unto is, *Do this, and live,* Rom. 10. 5. And *cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law, to do them,* Gal. 3. 10. And I wish that they would seriously think of it, and what need they have of *Christ,* whom they *rather persecute, then obey his Gospel* in love.

Indeed let them *get a true, lively and justifying faith. Put ye off concerning the former conversation, the Old man which is corrupted through the deceiveable lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your minds; and put on the New man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness,* Eph. 4. 22, 23, 24. and then *Christ and all his benefits and promises will belong unto you,* but not before. In the mean time, *you are in your blood,* Ezek. 16. 6. and have to answer not onely for your *Original guilt,* but for every *thought, word,* and *action* of yours, from your infancy, *Matth.* 9. 12, 13 *Luk.* 1. 53.

Gal. 5. 1, to 7. enough to make you bethink your ſelves. And ſo much of *Civil* and *Moral* men.

CHAP. IX.

SEcondly, there are others, and not a few that *ſeem* and *profeſs* themſelves real *Chriſtians*; when if they were well examined, and diſcovered, as *Jephta* once diſcovered, and diſtinguiſhed who were *Ephramites*, and who *Gileadites*, by their pronouncing the word *Shibboleth*, *Judg.* 12. 6. It would be found, that the moſt of theſe alſo, are no more like *Chriſtians*, than *Michaels Image of goats hair* was like *David*. Many have *a form of godlineſs*, while they *deny the power of it*; yea there are too many *titular Chriſtians*, who ſtand more upon the *outward appearance* of godlineſs, than the *inward eſſence*. Such as *ſeem*, and *are not*, *ſay* and *do not*, *profeſs* and *practiſe not*. Others there are, who be not onely *great talkers* of Religion, but great *frequenters of holy exerciſes*? yet altogether *neglect to practice the ſame*, Ezek. 33. 31. That like *ſick ſtomacks*, much do *ſwallow down*, but little do *diſgeſt*; that go to *Church* onely *to be ſeen* there, and out of ſelf-ends, that it may the more *inhaunſe their gain*, *increaſe their cuſtom*, or *to get credit* and eſteem thereby. Nor do they always miſs of their aim; for for outward ſhew they come ſhort of none. Neither is there any duty done by a *Chriſtian*, but an *Hypocrite* may outſtrip him in it. Who may be reſembled to that unwelcome gueſt *the wind*; for as the *wind will counterfeit any diſeaſe of the body*, whether it be the *ſtone*, *gowt*, and the like; So theſe outſide and *formal Chriſtians* will counterfeit every *grace of the ſoul*, as *faith*, *zeal*, and the like. Yea to the eye of the *world*, they reſemble *Moſcovia-glaſs*, which (though it be of little worth) is *as clear as Chriſtal*, *as tranſparant as air*; yea, the *Hypocrite* may not onely paſs for a true *Chriſtian*, (as did *Judas*, *Annanias*, and *Saphira*, *Nicholas* the *Deacon*, &c.) but they will *ſeem to outſtrip them* in *goodneſs*, as *ſnow* does *ſalt* and *ſugar* in *whiteneſs*. And well they may, when their principle *care* is, onely *to hide their defects*; as *Julius Cæſar*

wore

wore a garland of Bays onely to hide his *baldneſs*. Nor can you blame their *diſcretion* therein, whatever you do their *honeſty*: For,

Each cunning ſin, being clad in virtues ſhape,
Flies much reproof, and many ſtorms doth ſcape.

Theſe have a form of godlineſs, but are the worſe for it: For in that *they draw neer to God with their mouths, and honour him with their lips, when their hearts are far from him:* they are ſtiled *Hypocrites*, both by *Iſaiah*, *chap.*29.13. and our *Saviour*, *Mat.* 15. 7, 8. as well they deſerve it: But there are yet far worſe than theſe; yea, too many, who may be called *white Devils:* even ſuch as *make Religion a ſtalking horſe to villany, or a cloak to coſen the world unſeen.* Such as ſhrowd *an Egyptian heart under the habit of an Iſraelite*; whoſe *life* and *profeſſion* is a continual *incongruity*, and whoſe *works* are *antipodes* to their *words:* Their *profeſſion* being *honey* while their *practice* is *poyſon:* Even ſuch as *ſpeak like Angels, live like Devils:* have *Jacobs voyce, Eſaus hands:* That like *Ethiopians* are *white in teeth onely*, every way elſe *coal black*; being *Chriſtians in ſkin, Atheiſts at core. Judas* you know was *openly a Diſciple*, but *ſecretly a Devil.* The *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were *fair Profeſſors*, but *foul ſinners*; for *they devoured widows houſes under a colour of long prayers*, *Matth.*23.14,28. Which groſſer ſort of *Hypocrites* may be reſembled to ſome *wicked Ale-houſe*, that hath *Fear God, Be ſober, Watch and Pray, painted upon the walls*; when there is nothing but *ſwearing, and drunkenneſs in the ſame.* To a *filthy Strumpet* with a *painted face.* To the Serpent *Requiu*, that hath *ſcales as glorious as the Sun*, but *breath as infectious as the Aconite.* Or to the *Devil in* Samuels *likeneſs.*

But let theſe take heed, for as *diſſembled piety is double iniquity*, ſo their plagues ſhall be double in that they moſt wofully *ſhame Religion by profeſſing it, and make the way of truth evil ſpoken of*, 2 Pet. 2. 2. Yea, as of old *the people abhorred the ſervice of God*, and *became deſpiſers of his worſhip, becauſe thoſe prophane ſons of* Eli *were ſo wicked and ſcandalous*, 1 Sam. 2.17. ſo do theſe. Yea, thou *Hypocrite*, thou *white Devil:* thy *ill life ſingle, puls down more, than many good tongues can build up.*

CHAP. X.

I Grant there are of them ſo like *Chriſtians*, (as to the *external parts of Chriſtianity*) that it is no eaſie matter to convince them that they are not really ſuch; for they have been *baptized*, *live unreprovably*, *pay their dues*, *pray in their families*, *are charitable*, *chaſte*, *temperate*, *hear the beſt Miniſters*, *repeat Sermons*, *inſtruct their children and ſervants*, with many the like; therefore they muſt needs be good and real Chriſtians.

To which I anſwer, All this they may do, and yet be *but almoſt Chriſtians*: For as *a child of God*, by looking more upon his ſins then his graces, more upon his failings, then his faith, more upon in-dwelling luſts, then renewing grace, may *think his condition very bad*, *when it is very good*. So the *ſinner* by looking more upon his duties then his ſins, *may think his condition very good, and yet be in a wicked eſtate*. And the reaſon is, Many *miſtake common grace, for ſaving grace*; through the reſemblance that is between them. As many *take counterfeit mony*, *for current coin*; And as *Saul took the Devil for Samuel*, becauſe he appeared in *Samuels likeneſs*: So many *take common gifts for ſaving graces*, becauſe of the reſemblance. And *this is the common Rock that ſo many ſouls ſplit upon to their eternal hazard*. They take up a *form of godlineſs*, but deny the *power thereof*; And as many might have been *wiſe*, had they not ſo thought themſelves; ſo many *a formal Profeſſor*, might have been *a ſincere Believer*, had he not miſtook his *Profeſſion* for *Converſion*, his *Duties* for *Graces*, and ſo reſted in that for *Sincerity*, which is indeed but *Hypocriſie*.

A man may be *like or almoſt a Chriſtian*, and yet *not* be *a Chriſtian*. A man may come *neer to the Kingdom of Heaven*, *and yet be ne're the neer*. *Thou art not far from the Kingdom of Heaven*, ſaid our *Saviour* to *the young man*, Mark 12. 34.

There is an *external*, and an *internal worſhip of God*. There may be the *likeneſs of grace*, *without the life of grace*.

There

There is no grace but an *Hypocrite may have ſomewhat like it*; and there is *no duty done* by a *Chriſtian*, but an *Hypocrite* may *do ſomewhat like it.* A man may attain to many gifts, and ſeeming graces, and make a great progreſs in Religion; yea, *he may do all (as to external duties and worſhip) that a true Chriſtian can do, and yet be but almoſt a Chriſtian:* As obſerve what *God* ſaith, *Iſai.* 58. of that people; *They ſeek me daily, They delight to know my way, as a Nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the Ordinances of their God: They ask of me the Ordinances of Juſtice, They take delight in approaching to God,* verſ. 2. yea, in the next verſe, *They were a people much in faſting, and afflicting their ſouls: Wherefore have we faſted, ſay they, and thou ſeeſt it not?* And yet for all this, they were no better then a *generation of Hypocrites*, as you may finde if you read the Chapter.

Some neither hear nor do, as prophane ſinners; *ſome both hear and do*, as true *Believers*; *ſome hear but do not*, as hypocritical Profeſſors. A man may *believe all the* truths of the *Goſpel, all the promiſes, all the threatnings, all the Articles of the Creed to be true, and yet periſh for want of ſaving faith.* A man may be *converted from a courſe of prophaneneſs, to a form of godlineſs, from a filthy converſation, to a fair profeſſion, and yet be but almoſt a Chriſtian.* A man may be *outwardly reformed*, and yet *not ſavingly renewed*, &c.

CHAP. XI.

BUt would you know, who are indeed *Chriſtians*, as Saint *Paul* was; and *who but almoſt Chriſtians*, as *Agrippa was.* Or rather wouldſt thou rightly know the ſincerity of thine own heart, of thy profeſſion, of thy Religion, (which as one would think, ſhould be the earneſt deſire of every ingenious ſoul) then ask thy conſcience theſe queſtions. Art thou ſenſible how evil and wicked thou art? Doſt thou ſeriouſly lay to heart? firſt, *the corruption of thy nature, by reaſon of Original ſin?* ſecondly, *thy manifold breach of Gods righteous Law, by actual ſinne?* thirdly, *the guilt and puniſhment due to thee for* them *both?*

And

And in caſe thou art truly ſenſible of thy *wretchedneſſe*, it is a good ſign that thou art in ſome *forwardneſſe*, to be recovered. And indeed *the very firſt ſtep to grace, is to feel the want of grace, and the neceſſity of a Redeemer.* And the *next way to receive mercy, is to ſee your ſelf miſerable*

Doſt thou find that the *Word* and *Spirit* hath wrought *an apparent change in thy judgment, affections, and actions, to what they were formerly?* is *Chriſt thy greateſt joy, ſin thy greateſt ſorrow*, and *grace the prime object of thy deſires?* Art thou *as conſcientious alone* and in private, where *God* onely ſees thee, as *if thy greateſt enemy, or all the World did behold thee?* Doſt thou make conſcience of evil thoughts? grieve for thy unprofitableneſs under the means of grace? for the evil which cleaves to thy very beſt actions? and for ſins of Omiſſion? Whatever thou enjoyeſt on this ſide *Hell*, doſt thou think thy ſelf unworthy of it? Doſt thou *more fear the want of grace, then confide in what thou haſt?* Doſt thou endeavour to *leave every ſin*, and *make conſcience of every duty?* Doſt *thou make Gods glory the chief end of all thy actions*, and aims? Doſt thou deſire the converſion of others? Then my ſoul for thine, thou art *more then almoſt a Chriſtian.*

Again, *the love of grace in another* is *a good proof of the life of grace in our ſelves*; *a child of God cannot love a ſinner, as a ſinner*, Pſal. 15. 4. Prov. 29. 27. So *a ſinner cannot love a child of God, as a child of God.* Briefly, when a mans *heart* is *throwly renewed by grace, his mind ſavingly enlightned, his conſcience throwly convinced, the will truly humbled, and ſubdued, the affections ſpiritually raiſed, and ſanctified*; and when *mind*, and *will*, and *conſcience*, and *affections*, *all join iſſue* to help on with *performance of duties commanded*; then is a man *altogether a Chriſtian.*

But contrarily, he that takes up with *a form of Godlineſs, hating* or denying *the power* thereof, *is an Hypocrite, ipſo facto.* And let men take heed of that *ſin with two faces, and whoſe reward is the deepeſt place in Hell*: as appears by *Matth.* 23. And the rather, for that *wickedneſs does moſt rankle the heart, when it is kept in and diſſembled.* Beſides *the*

ſcab

ſcab of Hypocriſie does not ſeldom *break out into the plague ſore of Apoſtacy. Julian the Apoſtate* was firſt *Julian the Profeſſor.* To conclude, if thou findeſt not theſe notes of ſincerity in thy ſelf, let it be the earneſt deſire of thy ſoul, and thy principal endeavour to obtain the ſame. Otherwiſe, woe unto thee! For, *outward profeſſion*, where there is *want of inward truth, and real practice*, does but help to draw on, and *aggravate judgment:* The *Scribes* and *Phariſees* had not heard of *ſo many woes*, but for their *glorious pretences:* and had the *Figtree* in the *Goſpel* been utterly bare and *leafleſs*, it had in all probability eſcaped the *curſe.* Thus *miſtake through ignorance*, is one great cauſe of many mens falling ſhort of their hopes, and of their being *but almoſt Chriſtians*, while they *think themſelves Chriſtians indeed.*

CHAP. XII.

BUt Secondly, *Pride* is *another cauſe:* We are ſo proud by nature, that we have *an eye to ſee our beauty*, but *not our deformity; our parts, but not our ſpots; our ſeeming righteouſneſs, but not our real-naughtineſs*, our ſpiritual wretchedneſs. We have all for the moſt part *a ſelf righteouſneſs; Every man*, ſays Luther, *is born with a Pope in his belly.* But it muſt be the *work of grace onely*, that will *make us ſee our extream vileneſs*, and that will make us *acceptable to God*; and it muſt be *the work of grace, that muſt ſhew a man his want of grace.* It is the *Believers Motto, The leaſt of Saints, the greateſt of Sinners.* But the *Carnal mans Motto is, I thank God, I am not as other men* Eph. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Luke 18. 11. *But the onely way to become good, is firſt to believe that we are evil.*

Thirdly, *Another cauſe is Lazineſs, and the love of the World: Almoſt thou perſwadeſt me to become a Chriſtian*, ſays *Agrippa* to *Paul*, but he could not find in his heart to become one altogether; for then he muſt live a more ſtrict life, and relinquiſh the worlds wicked cuſtoms. So *Balaam could be willing to die the death of the righteous*, but to part with his covetouſneſs, and *live the life of the righteous, he could not*

find

finde in his heart: And therefore *Christ profited him nothing. Hell is to be had with ease, but the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence*, Matth. 11. 12. *Many shall seek to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but shall not be able, because they did not strive*, Luke 13. 24. Yea, many run well in the way of Christianity for a while, but they do not hold out. *Gal.*5.7. But *perseverance is the crown of all grace, and Heaven the crown of perseverance.*

It is said *of the truly righteous, he shall scarcely be saved*, 1 *Pet.*4. 18. And it is said of the *seemingly righteous, he shall be almost saved*, 1 Pet. 4. 18. Acts 26. 28. *Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God*, Mark 12. 34. *As good not at all, as never the nearer; as good never run the race, as miss of the goal, and prize we run for.* Wherefore content not thy self with being almost a Christian; but see thou beest one altogether, and in good earnest: For *all who are but almost Christians, shall be but almost saved; and to be saved almost, is to be damned.* We know *almost a son, is a bastard; almost sweet, is unsavoury. A Christian almost, is like a woman that dieth in travail*; almost she brought forth a son, but that almost killed both *the mother and the son too: If thou believest almost, thou shalt be saved almost.* As we may say of a *Thief that hath a pardon brought him, whilst he is upon the Gallows, he was almost saved, but he was hanged*, and his pardon did him no good. To be *almost a Christian*, is to be like the *foolish Virgins, that had Lamps, but without oyl in them*; for which they were shut out of Heaven, though they came to the very door, *Matth.*25. 10, 11, 12. Wherefore it concerns all that would go to Heaven, and be *indeed saved*, to become *Christians indeed, and in good earnest.*

CHAP. XIII.

AND what I say unto these, I say unto all, as well *prophane persons, and civil men, as to formal professors*; yea, it were to be wished, that *each man* that hath a soul, to live eternally in bliss or wo, would *look himself in this glass, and try himself by this touchstone.*

All

All that have any care of their own ſouls, or that prefer not *everlaſting flames of fire and brimſtone in Hell*, before *an eternal weight of ſuper-abundant glory in Heaven*: Nor will a wiſe man need much preſſing to this work; for what ſaith St. *Bernard*; *A wiſe man foreſeeth the torments of Hell, and preventeth them; onely a fool goes on merrily, until he feels them, and then ſays, I had not thought.*

Now that every man ought to examine himſelf, we have the *Apoſtles* injunction, 2 *Cor.* 13. *Examine your ſelves whether ye be in the faith, prove ye your own ſelves; know ye not your own ſelves? How that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be reprobates?* Verſ. 5. And the neceſſity thereof is very great: For (as *Chriſoſtome* ſpeaks) *every particular man is either the childe of God, and a member of Chriſt, or a childe of the Devil*, John 8. 44. *Of the womans ſeed, or of the Serpents*, *Gen.* 3. 15. For there is not a mean between them.

Secondly, We ſhould the rather do it, becauſe there are but a few *that are real and ſincere Chriſtians*, here and there one, like *timber trees in a wood*; or *like gold and jewels among other ſtuff*: *Thoſe whom Chriſt hath choſen out of the World, to believe in his name, are but a ſmall number, a little Flock*, compared with the multitude, *Luke* 12. 32. As, do we not read, *That the greateſt number go the broad way to deſtruction; and but a few the narrow way, that leadeth unto life*, Matth. 7. 13, 14. *That the whole world lieth in wickedneſs*, 1 John 5. 19. *That the number of thoſe whom Satan ſhall deceive, is as the ſand of the Sea*, Revel. 20. 8. *That all both ſmall and great, rich and poor, free and bond, receive the mark of the Beaſt in their foreheads*, Revel. 13. 16. Whereas they that believe the Goſpel, are but few in number, Rom. 10. 16. Iſa. 53. 1. *That many are called, and but few choſen*, Matth. 20. 16. and 22. 14. *That though the number of the Children of Iſrael, are as the ſand of the Sea, yet onely a remnant ſhall be ſaved*, Rom. 9. 27. *There were but ſeven righteous perſons in the old world. All Sodome afforded but ten. Elijah ſaith, I onely remain a Prophet of the Lord, but Baals Prophets are Four hundred and fifty.* 1 Kings 18.

22.

22. *Micha complaineth of the multitude of the wicked in his time, and ſmall number of the faithful,* Mic. 7. 2. *Behold, ſaith Iſaiah, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for ſigns and wonders in Iſrael,* Iſa. 8. 18. and in Chap. 53. 1. *Lord who hath believed our report? Lord, ſaith Saint John, thou haſt but a few names in Sardis,* Rev. 3. 4. *We read alſo, that the whole City went to drive Chriſt out of their coaſts, not a Gadarean was found, that either dehorted his fellows, or oppoſed the motion,* Matth. 8. 34. *When Pilate asked, what ſhall be done with Jeſus? all with one conſent cried out, Crucifi him, crucifie him,* Matth. 27. 22. *There was a general ſhout for Diana for two hours together, Great is Diana of the Epheſians; not one man took Pauls part,* Act. 19. 27, 28. *Yea, the chief Jews told* Paul, *that his ſect was every where ſpoken againſt,* Act. 28. 22. How then does it concern every man of us, to bethink our ſelves, whether we be of that ſmall number, and to miſtruſt the worſt of himſelf; as all the wiſe and ſincere hearted do, witneſs the *Apoſtles, Mat.* 26. 22. And for want of this, *many go to Hell, while they think themſelves in the way to Heaven:* As, why elſe did thoſe *Jews* ſo confidently boaſt themſelves the *children of Abraham?* when indeed they were the *Devils children, Joh* 8. 44. And thoſe *Revel.* 3. 9. *ſay they were Jews,* when indeed they *were of the Synagogue of Satan,* as the *Holy Ghoſt* tells us. And ſo at this preſent, becauſe men are called after *Chriſts name, and wear his cognisance*; they not once doubt, but they are *Chriſtians beyond all exceptions.*

CHAP. XIV.

WHence it were to be wiſht, that a *ſeperation* were made, *between ſuch as ſerve Chriſt in ſincerity, and ſuch as ſerve him not*; *as* Jehu *made a ſeparation between the ſervants of God, and the worſhippers of Baal,* 2 Kings 10. 23. This were the way to make men look into themſelves. But

Thirdly and laſtly, There can be nothing of greater conſequence to the careleſs: For are *Formal Profeſſors almoſt* ſaid

ſaved, and yet periſh? Do you that are not ſo much as formal, ſtand and tremble. For if they that have gone beyond us, fall ſhort of *Heaven*, what ſhall become of ſuch as fall ſhort of them? *If he ſhall periſh who is almoſt a Chriſtian, what ſhall they do, that are not at all Chriſtians?* If he that owneth and profeſſeth Chriſt, and leaves many ſins for Chriſt, may notwithſtanding be damned, what then ſhall his doom be, who diſhonoureth *Chriſt*, and *refuſeth to part with one ſin, one luſt, one oath for Chriſt? Nay, that openly blaſphemeth the precious name of Chriſt? and takes up arms againſt him, and all that worſhip him in ſincerity.* If he that is *outwardly ſanctified*, ſhall yet be *eternally rejected*, and ſhut out of *Heaven*; then ſurely the *filthy Adulterer*, the *Swiniſh Drunkard*, the *helliſh Swearer and Curſer*, the *prophane Sabbath-breaker*, the *foul-mouthed ſcoffer, and ſlanderer of the Saints* much more. If there be a woe to him that falls ſhort of Heaven; then how ſad ſhall their woe be, that fall ſhort of them that fall ſhort of Heaven? O that God would make the conſideration of this an awakening argument to *ſinners, that are aſleep in their luſts, without the leaſt fear of death, or dread of damnation!*

Now to wind up all with a word of exhortation; If by what you have heard, the *Spirit of God* hath ſtirred up in your hearts any good motions and reſolutions, to *receive with meekneſs the ingrafted Word, which is able to ſave your ſouls.* If you be convinced that you are not as you ſhould be, real *Chriſtians*, and do reſolve upon a new courſe; let your reſolutions be peremptory and conſtant, and take heed you harden not again, as *Pharaoh*, the *Philiſtins*, the *Young man in the Goſpel*, *Pilate* and *Judas* did. Reſemble not the *Iron*, which is no longer *ſoft*, then it is in *the fire.* Be not like thoſe that are *Sea-ſick*, who are much *troubled* while they are *on ſhipboard, but preſently well again when they are come to ſhore:* For *that good*, ſaith S. *Gregory*, *will do us no good, which is not made good by perſeverance.* If with theſe premonitions, the *Spirit* ſhall vouchſafe to ſtir up in your hearts any good motions, and holy purpoſes to obey *God*, in letting your ſins go; *quench not, grieve not the Spirit*, 1 Theſ. 5.19.

5. 19. *Return not with the dog to thy vomit, leſt thy latter end prove ſeven-fold worſe than thy beginning,* Matth. 12. 43, 45. as it fared with *Julian the Apoſtate,* and *Judas the Traytor*: Yea as your tender the good of your own ſouls, ſet upon the work preſently; *Provide with* Joſeph, *for the dearth to come; and with* Noah, *in the days of thine health, build the Ark of a good conſcience againſt the floods of ſickneſs: Imitate the Ant, that provides her meat in ſummer for the winter following.* Yea, do it while the *yerning bowels,* the *bleeding wounds,* the *compaſſionate arms* of *Jeſus Chriſt lie open to receive you*; whilſt ye have *health* and *life,* and *means,* and *time,* to repent and make your peace with *God*: As you tender (I ſay) the everlaſting happineſs and welfare of your almoſt loſt and drowned ſouls. As you expect or hope for *grace* or *mercy,* for *joy* and *comfort,* for *Heaven* and *ſalvation,* for *endleſs bliſs and glory* at the laſt; As you would eſcape the *direful wrath of God,* the *bitter ſentence and doom of Chriſt*; *The never dying ſting and worm of conſcience; The tormenting and ſoul-ſcorching flames of Hell, and everlaſting ſeparation from Gods bliſsful preſence*; ſtrive after thoſe graces wherewith a true Chriſtian is qualified. Nor do I ask any more, but that you will *now hearken unto Chriſt, as you would have Chriſt another day hearken unto you.*

Onely by way of *caution,* expect not that this ſhould be done by any power of thine own; For a *child* may as ſoon *create it ſelf, as a man in the ſtate of nature regenerate himſelf,* Eph. 2. 1. 2 Cor. 3. 5. We are *ſwift to all evil,* but *to any good, immoveable.* Wherefore as when *David came to fight with* Goliah, *he caſt away* Sauls *armour*; *ſo do thou in this caſe, caſt away all truſt and confidence in thy ſelf, and onely ſet forward in the name of the Lord God of Iſrael,* and be ſure to uſe the means that God hath appointed, and that power which *Chriſt* ſhall give thee, and then he will not be wanting, on his part: *As in that caſe of the Prodigal Son,* Luke 15. 17. to 25.

Conſider what I have ſaid, and the Lord give you underſtanding in all things.

FINIS.